

REMARKS

As a preliminary matter, Applicants note with thanks the Examiner's indication that claims 12 and 13 are allowed over the prior art of record.

Claims 1-11 and 14-19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112 as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. Further, claims 1-11 and 14-19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 as being directed to non-statutory subject matter.

First, with respect to the 101 rejection, claims 1, 5, 11 and 14-16 have been amended to recite in the preamble: a computerized search system [or method] for searching a plurality of search condition combinations in an information search. Applicants submit that the claims, as amended, are directed to a practical application within the technological arts, and as such, are statutory subject matter. The present invention is directed to a computerized search system [or method] that allows the user to do an information search with a plurality of search condition combinations. Applicants submit that the amendment is fully supported by the specification at page 4 line 25 through page 5 line 4, which disclose "An object of the present invention is to provide a search system for realizing an improved user interface when search results are obtained for respective search condition combinations in an information search such as a full text search."

One practical application of the present invention is that the user does not have to repeat a search multiple times depending on the number of different search combinations.

For example, if a search is desired to be performed with the search expression “TOKYO AND SUBWAY” by dividing the duration from 1992 to 1998 in units of years, a search must be repeated 7 times while changing the condition of the duration, i.e. from 1992 to 1993, from 1993 to 1994, from 1994 to 1995, etc. This is burdensome on the user. However, in the present invention, all the search combinations can be entered into a single information search. Thus, applicants submit that the amended claims are statutory in nature because they are directed to a practical application within the technological arts.

Similarly, with respect to claims 17 and 18, the preambles have been amended to recite “A computerized search system for searching a plurality of search condition elements in an information search.” Further, the preamble of claim 19 has been amended to recite “A computerized search system for searching a plurality of search conditions in an information search.” These amendments are supported by page 15, line 10 through page 16, line 5, which teaches that search conditions are input into corresponding dimensions of the input boxes, and elements are extracted from the dimensions. In this way, a user can reduce the amount of work in inputting multiple search expressions into the search. Thus, for the same reasons put forth with respect to claims 1-11 and 14-16, claims 17-19 are statutory in nature because they are directed to a practical application within the technological arts. Thus, applicants request that the 101 rejection be withdrawn.

With respect to the 112 rejection, the independent claims will be addressed in ascending numerical order.

With respect to claims 1 and 11, the Examiner asserts that there is insufficient antecedent basis for “A search system comprising: an inputting device inputting query specific information.” Claim 1 has been amended to recite “A computerized search system for searching a plurality of search condition combinations in an information search comprising: an inputting device inputting specification information.” The support for the amendment to the preamble has been submitted, above. Applicants further submit that the inputting device (as amended) is fully supported by the specification at FIG. 2A and page 8, lines 8-13, which disclose “In the first aspect of the present invention, the search system comprises an inputting unit 11 and an instructing unit 12. *The inputting unit 11 inputs the specification information* for collectively specifying a plurality of search condition combinations.” Thus, the rejection with respect to claims 1 and 11 has been overcome and should be withdrawn.

With respect to claim 5, the Examiner asserts that there is insufficient antecedent basis for “A search system comprising: an obtaining device obtaining a plurality of search results for a single search”. Applicants have amended the obtaining device of claim 5 to recite “an obtaining device obtaining a plurality of search results”. Applicants submit that this element is fully supported at FIG. 2A and page 9, lines 5-12 which discloses “*the obtaining unit 13 obtains a plurality of search results* for a plurality of search condition combinations.” Thus, the rejection with respect to claim 5 has been overcome and should be withdrawn.

With respect to claim 14, the Examiner asserts that there is insufficient antecedent basis for “A search system comprising: collectively specifying a plurality of search condition combinations in a full text search”. Applicants traverse because the “collectively specifying” feature of claim 14 is fully supported at page 8, lines 8-15 which discloses “In the first aspect of the present invention, the search system comprises an inputting unit 11 and an instructing unit 12. The inputting unit 11 inputs the specification information for *collectively specifying a plurality of search condition combinations*. The instructing unit 12 instructs an *information search based on the input specification information*.” Further, at page 5 line 4, the specification discloses that a full text search is a type of an information search (“...search results are obtained for respective search condition combinations in *an information search such as a full text search*”). Thus, the rejection with respect to claim 14 has been overcome and should be withdrawn.

With respect to claim 15, the Examiner asserts that there is insufficient antecedent basis for “A search system comprising: inputting means for inputting query specification information for a single search”. Applicants have amended the inputting means feature of claim 15 to recite “inputting means for inputting specification information”. Applicants submit that this element is fully supported at FIG. 2A and page 8, lines 8-13, which disclose “In the first aspect of the present invention, the search system comprises an inputting unit 11 and an instructing unit 12. *The inputting unit 11 inputs the specification*

information for collectively specifying a plurality of search condition combinations.” Thus, the rejection with respect to claim 15 has been overcome and should be withdrawn.

With respect to claim 16, the Examiner asserts that there is insufficient antecedent basis for “A search system comprising: an obtaining means for obtaining a plurality of search results in a single search”. Applicants have amended the obtaining means of claim 16 to recite “obtaining means for obtaining a plurality of search results”. Applicants submit that the limitation is fully supported at FIG. 2A and page 9, lines 5-12 which discloses “*the obtaining unit 13 obtains a plurality of search results* for a plurality of search condition combinations.” Thus, the rejection with respect to claim 16 has been overcome and should be withdrawn.

With respect to claim 17, the Examiner asserts that there is insufficient antecedent basis for “A search system comprising: an inputting device inputting.” The support for the amendment to the preamble has been submitted, above. Applicants traverse the rejection because the “inputting device inputting” element is fully supported by the specification at FIG. 2A and page 8, lines 8-13, which disclose “In the first aspect of the present invention, the search system comprises an inputting unit 11 and an instructing unit 12. *The inputting unit 11 inputs the specification information* for collectively specifying a plurality of search condition combinations.” Thus, the rejection with respect to 17 has been overcome and should be withdrawn.

With respect to claim 18, the Examiner asserts that there is insufficient antecedent basis for “A search system comprising: an obtaining device obtaining a plurality of search results”. Applicants traverse because the obtaining device is fully supported at FIG. 2A and page 9, lines 5-12 which discloses “*the obtaining unit 13 obtains a plurality of search results for a plurality of search condition combinations.*” Thus, the rejection with respect to claim 18 has been overcome and should be withdrawn.

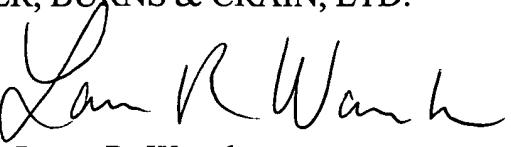
With respect to claim 19, the Examiner asserts that there is insufficient antecedent basis for “A search system comprising: an inputting device inputting a number of dimensions of an input array of a single search”. The support for the preamble has been submitted, above. Applicants have amended the inputting device to recite “an inputting device inputting a number of dimensions of an input array”. Applicants submit that this feature is fully supported by the specification at page 11, lines 8-13 which disclose “The multi-dimensional input module 25 receives the information for specifying a plurality of search condition combinations from a user in a *multi-dimensional data format*, and inputs the received information to the automatic search expression generation module 26”. Further, at page 27 line 23 through page 28 line 3 discloses “The multi-dimensional input module 25 first initializes an input screen (step S1), inputs a specified number of dimensions (step S2), inputs the number of elements in each of the specified dimensions (step S3), and initializes an *input array representing multi-dimensional data* (step S4).” Thus, the rejection with respect to claim 19 has been overcome and should be withdrawn.

For all of the above reasons, Applicants request reconsideration and allowance of the claimed invention. Should the Examiner be of the opinion that a telephone conference would aid in the prosecution of the application, or that outstanding issues exist, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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